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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: POPULATION QUESTIONS

Progress report on the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

SUMMARY

The present report has been prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/93, in paragraph 11 of which the Council requested the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development to report to it at its substantive sessions of 1992, 1993 and 1994 on the progress made in all aspects of the preparatory activities for the Conference.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The International Conference on Population and Development is an important and timely opportunity for the international community to acknowledge the integral place of population within sustainable development. The challenge of articulating this interrelationship through consensual adoption of a programme of activity directed at the next decade and well into the next century is a substantial task for all those involved in the Conference and its preparatory process.

2. The goals of the Conference have been articulated by the Economic and Social Council and given further emphasis by the General Assembly. At its first session, in March 1991, the Preparatory Committee set the objectives for the Conference and authorized the major aspects of the preparatory process. The second session must reach agreement on the nature and substance of the final document to be adopted by the 1994 Conference. Decisions taken at this session on these aspects of the Conference will be particularly important in providing guidance for the Conference secretariat as it prepares a draft of the final document for consideration and negotiation at the third session of the Preparatory Committee. The present report seeks to describe major aspects of the preparatory process and related issues.

I. BACKGROUND, THEME AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

3. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1989/91, decided to convene in 1994, under the auspices of the United Nations, an "international meeting on population". Pursuant to that resolution, the Council, in its resolution 1991/93, decided to call the meeting the International Conference on Population and Development and further defined the objectives and themes of the Conference. The Council, in its resolution 1992/37, accepted with gratitude the offer of the Government of Egypt to host the Conference in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994.

4. In its resolution 1991/93, the Council decided that the objectives of the Conference should be:

(a) To contribute to the review and appraisal of the progress made in reaching the objectives, goals and recommendations of the World Population Plan of Action and to identify the obstacles encountered;

(b) To identify instruments and mechanisms in order to ensure the operational implementation of the recommendations;

(c) To maintain and strengthen the level of awareness of population issues on the international agenda and their linkage to development;

(d) To consider the desired focus of intensified action at the global, regional and national levels, as well as all necessary ways and means of treating population issues in their proper development perspective during the forthcoming decade and beyond;

(e) To adopt a set of recommendations for the next decade in order to respond to the population and development issues of high priority identified in the same resolution;

(f) To enhance the mobilization of resources needed, especially in developing countries, for the implementation of the results of the Conference.

5. In the same resolution, the Council emphasized that the overall theme of the Conference would be population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Within that theme it identified six groups of issues (not listed in any order of priority), as those requiring the greatest attention during the forthcoming decade:

(a) Population growth, changes in demographic structure, including ageing of population, and the regional diversity of such changes, with particular emphasis on the interaction between demographic variables and socio-economic development;

(b) Population policies and programmes, with emphasis on the mobilization of resources for developing countries, at the international and national levels by each country according to its capacity;

(c) The interrelationships between population, development, environment and related matters;

(d) Changes in the distribution of population, including socio-economic determinants of internal migration and the consequences for urban and rural development, as well as determinants and consequences of all types of international migration;

(e) Linkages between enhancing the roles and socio-economic status of women and population dynamics, including adolescent motherhood, maternal and child health, education and employment, with particular reference to the access of women to resources and the provision of services;

(f) Family-planning programmes, health and family well-being.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

6. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1989/91, designated the Population Commission, meeting in open-ended session, with the participation of any Member of the United Nations that is not a member of the Commission and any other State, as the preparatory committee for the Conference. The first session of the Preparatory Committee was held in New York from 4 to 8 March 1991. At the invitation of the General Assembly, the Council, at its organizational session in February 1993, reconsidered the timing and duration of the second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee and decided to reschedule the second session to take place from 10 to 21 May 1993 and to convene the third session from 11 to 22 April 1994. The Council also decided to postpone until 1994 the twenty-seventh session of the Population Commission and to consider at the Council's substantive session of 1993 the possibility of scheduling it in

conjunction with the third session of the Preparatory Committee (see Council resolution 1993/4).

7. The Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as Secretary-General of the Conference, and the Director of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat, as Deputy Secretary-General. The Secretary-General of the Conference has designated the Director of the Technical and Evaluation Division of the United Nations Population Fund as Executive Coordinator of the Conference and has also designated the Coordinator of World Population Conference Implementation of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat as Deputy Executive Coordinator of the Conference, based on the need for maximum economy as requested by the Economic and Social Council.

8. The General Assembly, in resolution 46/186, authorized the establishment of four Professional posts (two at UNFPA and two at the Population Division), and four General Service posts (two at UNFPA and two at the Population Division) for the biennium 1992-1993. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have each seconded a staff member to the Conference secretariat. Furthermore, extrabudgetary resources provided by both Canada and UNICEF have allowed for the creation of three additional Professional posts in the Conference secretariat. The Conference secretariat's responsibilities include coordination of overall organizational preparations for the Conference, the promotion of regional and national preparatory activities, other activities also designed to increase awareness of Conference issues and the development of close cooperation with national Governments. It is also responsible for coordinating the substantive aspects of the preparations for the Conference, including the six expert group meetings, the review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action and the formulation of draft recommendations for the 1994 Conference.

9. Representatives of each of the departments of the United Nations Secretariat involved in the organization and conduct of the Conference, together with members of the Conference secretariat, participate in periodic planning consultations. In November 1992 a planning mission went to Cairo to inspect the conference facilities and hold preliminary discussions with the Egyptian authorities on the terms of reference and details of the host country agreement. A representative of non-governmental organizations also participated in that planning mission. A further mission is planned for mid-1993, at which time it is anticipated that the agreement will be finalized. The Conference secretariat works closely with the Preparatory Committee for the Conference of the Government of Egypt.

III. EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS

10. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1991/93, authorized the Secretary-General of the Conference to convene six expert group meetings corresponding to the six groups of issues defined above.

11. Each expert group included 15 internationally renowned experts, invited in their personal capacity, along with representatives of relevant units, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and selected intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. A special effort was made to include as many women as possible among the experts and to have a full range of relevant scientific disciplines and geographical regions represented. Each expert group meeting lasted five days. The standard documentation for each meeting included a substantive background paper prepared by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat in consultation with UNFPA, technical papers prepared by each of the experts and technical contributions provided by the participating intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the specialized agencies and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. At the conclusion of each meeting, a set of recommendations was adopted, which will be submitted to the Preparatory Committee for the Conference at its second session in May 1993.

12. The first expert group meeting, on population, environment and development, was held at United Nations Headquarters from 20 to 24 January 1992 and was attended by invited experts in the field of population, environment and development; representatives of the United Nations system of organizations; policy makers; and representatives of both intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The Meeting examined the trends and critical linkages between population, the environment and sustainable development. The impact of population change and socio-economic development on rural and urban environments was discussed. The participants then addressed issues relating to the demographic effects of environmental stress and identified a series of conflicts and complementary relationships between population, environment and development. The participants adopted 18 recommendations.

13. The second expert group meeting, on population policies and programmes, was hosted by the Government of Egypt, in Cairo from 12 to 16 April 1992. It placed special emphasis on the full mobilization of resources for population policies and programmes for the developing countries, at both the international and national levels. The first part of the Meeting analysed the global evolution of population policies since 1984. National experiences in the major regions of the world were revised. The second part of the Meeting focused on population programmes; population experiences since the adoption of the World Population Plan of Action in 1974 were reviewed and two case-studies (Indonesia and Rwanda) were analysed. An assessment of needs was also part of the Meeting's deliberations. The third major item on the agenda dealt with the mobilization of resources: domestic (public, private and non-governmental), bilateral and multilateral; and resources for the least developed countries. Finally, the Meeting discussed future directions and challenges in the field of population policies and programmes. Twenty-one recommendations were adopted by the Expert Group.

14. The third expert group meeting, on population and women, was hosted by the Government of Botswana, in Gaborone from 22 to 26 June 1992 and financed by a contribution from the Government of the Netherlands. In addition to a general exchange of views and evidence regarding women's roles and status in development, and the interrelations between development, population programmes and women's status, the Meeting devoted particular attention to the following areas: women's health, especially reproductive health, and women's roles and

status in relation to the health of other family members, particularly children; adolescent fertility, marriage and reproductive health; gender perspective in family planning needs and programmes; the education of girls and women, and the relationship of education to fertility and to child health and welfare; women's economic activity and its relationship to fertility and to child health and welfare; women's role as environmental managers, and environmental issues in relation to women's health and women's reproductive and productive roles. Both developed and developing country situations were considered, although the main emphasis was on the latter. The Expert Group adopted 32 recommendations.

15. The fourth expert group meeting, on family planning, health and family well-being, hosted by the Government of India, took place in Bangalore from 26 to 29 October 1992. The Meeting examined such topics as the political, economic and socio-cultural contexts of family planning programmes (with special emphasis on the role of women), the impact of family planning programmes around the world; the operational aspects of family planning programmes; safe motherhood, child survival and sexually-transmitted diseases (including acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS)), the implications for family well-being and child survival of changes in the size and structure of the family and the issue of community involvement in family planning programmes. The Meeting adopted a set of 35 recommendations.

16. The fifth expert group meeting, on population growth and demographic structure, hosted by the Government of France, took place in Paris from 16 to 20 November 1992. The Meeting debated the following topics: population growth and socio-economic development; confronting poverty in developing countries: demographic, social and economic responses; demographic impacts of development patterns; demographic and health transitions (including the demographic and developmental consequences of the AIDS epidemic in Africa); population growth, employment and education; social changes and the elderly in developing countries (including the issue of support for elderly women in the context of changing family structures); and social development and ageing in developed countries, focusing, inter alia, on the growing challenge of the very old. It adopted a set of 19 recommendations.

17. The sixth expert group meeting, on population distribution and migration, hosted by the Government of Bolivia, took place in Santa Cruz from 18 to 22 January 1993. The Meeting reviewed the emerging issues in the field of population distribution and migration and debated topics such as the implications for development of various patterns of population distribution in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as in the industrialized countries; the significance of migration as a family survival strategy in developing countries; policies affecting internal migration and population distribution, including the issue of urban bias in Government policies; the social and environmental problems associated with rapid urbanization; the emerging issues related to international migration in a changing world, such as the question of refugees and asylum-seekers and the increasingly significant role of developing countries in international migration. The Meeting recognized that population mobility was an option to improve the life chances of a wide section of the world population and considered that both permanent and non-permanent flows were rational responses by individuals and families to interregional differences in opportunities and to the need to ensure and widen the sources of family support. The Meeting adopted a set of 37 recommendations.

18. A more detailed report on the Expert Group Meetings (E/CONF.84/PC/12), which also synthesizes common themes which emerged from those meetings, has been prepared for submission to the Preparatory Committee at its second session.

IV. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

19. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1991/93, invited the regional commissions to convene meetings or conferences to review the experience gained in population policies and programmes in their regions, bearing in mind the relationship between such policies and programmes and development issues, and to propose future action, as part of their contribution to the preparatory activities for the Conference.

20. The first of such regional conferences, the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, jointly sponsored by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNFPA, was held in Denpasar, Indonesia from 19 to 27 August 1992. The theme of the Conference was Population and Sustainable Development: Goals and Strategies into the Twenty-first Century. Prior to the Conference, three preparatory seminars were held: on population, environment and sustainable development (13-18 May 1991, Jomtien, Thailand); on migration and urbanization (21-25 January 1992, Seoul); and on planning and implementation of family planning/family health and welfare programmes (17-21 March 1992, Beijing). The Conference included a meeting of senior officials (19-25 August 1992), followed by a two-day ministerial meeting (26-27 August 1992). The Meeting of Ministers adopted the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development which spells out regional goals and recommendations for population and sustainable development into the twenty-first century.

21. The Third African Population Conference, jointly organized by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and UNFPA, in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Union for African Population Studies (UAPS), was held in Dakar from 7 to 12 December 1992. The Conference, whose theme was Population, Family and Sustainable Development, examined the following major issues: the implementation of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action; the African family in the context of socio-economic development; strategies for sustainable development; emerging population problems and new orientations and strategies; and population policies and programmes in Africa. The Conference adopted the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development, which includes, among its quantitative goals, a reduction of the regional population growth rate to 2.5 per cent by the year 2000 and 2 per cent by 2010 and an increase of the contraceptive prevalence rate to 20 per cent by the year 2000 and 40 per cent by 2010 for Africa as a whole.

22. The European Population Conference, jointly convened by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Council of Europe and UNFPA, was held in Geneva from 23 to 26 March 1993. It involved countries in Europe and North America. The principal themes of the Conference were: international migration; fertility and the family; health and mortality; selected consequences of population growth and age structure and international cooperation in the field of population. The Conference adopted a set of recommendations.

23. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arab States and UNFPA jointly sponsored the Arab Population Conference in Amman from 4 to 8 April 1993. The Conference included a three-day meeting of experts and senior officials, immediately followed by a two-day ministerial meeting. The senior officials meeting discussed papers dealing with population, environment and development; population growth and demographic structure; population distribution and internal migration; international migration, population and women; family planning, health and family well-being; and population policies and programmes. The declaration adopted by the ministerial meeting will be submitted to the Preparatory Committee as the contribution of the Arab region, which includes the countries of North Africa and the Middle East.

24. The Latin America and Caribbean Population and Development Conference, jointly sponsored by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and UNFPA, will be held in Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993. As part of the preparations for the regional conference, a meeting of government experts took place in Saint Lucia from 6 to 9 October 1992. The discussions centred on the following six themes: population growth, structure and distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean: socio-economic trends and implications; population dynamics and development in the Caribbean subregion; population policies and programmes; population growth and distribution: their relation to development and the environment; women and population dynamics; and family planning, health and family well-being.

25. The declaration or recommendations from each of the five regional conferences will be made available to delegations and other participants at the second session of the Preparatory Committee. Each declaration will be provided in the United Nations languages used by each respective regional conference.

26. The regional conferences completed thus far have demonstrated that, notwithstanding inevitable regional perspectives, many common issues and views exist. In the African, Asian and Pacific and European Conferences there was common reaffirmation of the imperative that couples and individuals must have the right to determine the size of their families. Similarly, there was common recognition of the central place of women in all aspects of population and sustainable development and the need to ensure equality of opportunity for women and young girls in all social and economic spheres. The interrelationship of population, the environment and economic activity was also recognized, as was the vital role of enhanced international cooperation in all areas related to population and development. The positive contribution of non-governmental and community groups in the implementation of population programmes and activities was also acknowledged. It is proposed to conduct a full evaluation of common themes once each of the regional conferences has been held.

V. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

27. In order for the International Conference on Population and Development to achieve its goals and to ensure that all countries contribute to and participate in it, the importance of preparations at the national level has been emphasized. The Secretary-General of the Conference has invited each participating country to establish a committee to serve as a focal point for preparatory activities

and for the Conference itself. National committees are undertaking a variety of preparatory activities, including the organization of conferences and meetings, awareness-creation and the preparation of a national report on population, which will address the population situation, policies and programmes of the country concerned and focus on practical, concrete steps to reach population goals in each country.

28. The Conference secretariat has prepared an annotated outline for use by Governments in the preparation of their national report. The report will cover the country's demographic situation (past, present and future outlook); the country's population policy and programme framework; the national perception of population issues; the evolution and current status of population policy; and information concerning such programme sectors as maternal and child health and family planning; population information, education and communication; population data collection and analysis; women, population and development; population and the environment; and youth, AIDS and ageing. The report will also cover the operational aspects of programme implementation, including national implementation strategy, financial aspects of the population programme and monitoring and evaluation. The national reports are expected to highlight the constraints encountered in the operational implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and subsequent international agreements on population issues. A comprehensive analysis of national reports will be prepared by the Conference secretariat for presentation to the 1994 Conference.

29. As of early 1993 the Conference secretariat had been notified of the establishment and activity of more than 80 national committees related to the preparatory process for the Conference. Modest financial support is being provided to assist developing countries with national-level preparatory activities. Funding for this is coming from the UNFPA Trust Fund for the Conference.

VI. SEVENTH POPULATION INQUIRY AND MONITORING ACTIVITIES

30. Since 1963, the Population Division has compiled the views and policies of Member States in the field of population through a series of periodic surveys entitled United Nations Population Inquiries Among Governments. The results of these inquiries have been important inputs to previous United Nations population conferences. The Seventh Population Inquiry is currently under way: at the end of 1992, replies had already been received from about 40 Member States. The results of the Inquiry will be made available to the 1994 Conference.

31. Population trends and policies have been monitored by the Population Division since 1977. As requested by the 1984 International Conference on Population, the United Nations also undertakes the monitoring of multilateral population programmes, a task assigned by the Secretary-General to UNFPA. Both monitoring exercises are carried out on a continuous basis, and their results are biennially examined by the Population Commission. The results of the monitoring exercises will be a further contribution to the preparatory activities of the 1994 Conference.

VII. PARTICIPATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

32. The General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, stressed the importance attached by Member States to the participation and contribution of non-governmental organizations from both developing and developed countries. It requested the Economic and Social Council to adopt, at its organizational session for 1993, modalities for the participation in and contribution to the Conference of non-governmental organizations, taking into account the experience of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as well as previous United Nations population conferences. The Council, in its resolution 1993/4, adopted procedures for the participation of non-governmental organizations. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council, which express the wish to participate in Conference activities, will be accredited. Other non-governmental organizations may apply for accreditation in accordance with the criteria established by Council resolution 1993/4. It is anticipated that a substantial number of non-governmental organizations will be accredited during the preparatory process for the Conference.

33. In March 1991, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO) established the NGO Planning Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development. Membership in the Planning Committee is open to all non-governmental organizations involved with the 1994 Conference, regardless of their consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. This NGO Planning Committee has established a Steering Committee to assist in facilitating full participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process for the Conference and the Conference itself. The Planning Committee has held several meetings, the latest of which took place on 8 January 1993 in New York and was attended by representatives of over 100 non-governmental organizations. Its Steering Committee met in New York on 11 and 12 March 1993 to make further arrangements for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparations for the Conference.

VIII. INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

34. In August 1991, the Secretary-General of the Conference wrote to all United Nations agencies and organizations involved in the field of population to inform them of the Conference and to request that each appoint a focal point. Focal points will coordinate the participation of their agency or organization in the Conference and its preparatory process. Twenty-three have now been designated.

35. In October 1991, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) established the Ad hoc Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development to ensure inter-agency coordination and participation by United Nations bodies in the Conference and its preparatory process. The Task Force met informally in January 1992 and had its first formal meeting in New York on 6 July 1992, during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. The next meeting of the Task Force will take place after the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

36. The Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat organized a meeting of United Nations autonomous research institutes

to discuss and coordinate the collective contribution that they could make to the Conference. The meeting, chaired by the Rector of the United Nations University, took place at United Nations Headquarters on 2 October 1992. It was agreed that each institute would prepare a short summary of the findings of its ongoing or recently completed research activities related to the overall theme of the Conference, together with operational recommendations based on those findings. The United Nations University will act as a focal point for this undertaking, bringing together and synthesizing the inputs of the research institutes in a collective contribution to be transmitted to the Preparatory Committee.

IX. INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

37. Development of broad-based interest in the objectives and activities of the International Conference on Population and Development will be an important aspect of its success. The task of meeting this challenge is a considerable one. It is being addressed in a variety of ways. The Conference secretariat publishes a periodic newsletter covering all aspects of the preparatory process for the Conference. During 1992 four issues were produced, entitled POPULATION 94. In early 1993 the title of the newsletter was changed to ICPD 94. It is intended to be issued every two months in English, French and Spanish. A poster for the Conference has been produced by UNFPA and a brochure is planned.

38. A programme of public information for the Conference is carried out in close cooperation with UNFPA and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, to which regular budgetary resources are expected to be allocated in 1994.

X. FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND STATUS OF FUNDING

39. For the biennium 1992-1993, the General Assembly, in resolution 46/186, approved appropriations from the programme budget, which included the amount of $1,485,000 for the Conference. An additional $558,400 for the same biennium was to be sought from extrabudgetary resources. The overall requirements for the preparation and holding of the Conference have been estimated at $5,651,000 (at revised 1991 rates), comprising $3,000,700 in non-conference-servicing costs and $2,650,300 for conference servicing.

40. Two trust funds have been established by the Secretary-General. The first, the Trust Fund for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, is to be used to support conference preparatory activities. Thus far, contributions to the Trust Fund totalling $1,179,173 have been received from Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States of America. The second fund, the Voluntary Fund for Supporting Developing Countries' Participation in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, was established to facilitate the participation of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in the preparatory process and the Conference itself. Thus far, Austria, Finland, Spain and Sweden have made pledges or contributions totalling $376,585.

41. A UNFPA Trust Fund has been established for the purpose of supporting national preparatory activities, including meetings and studies at the country level, and activities that increase awareness of the Conference. Thus far, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Thailand have contributed or pledged a total of $1,135,277 to this Fund.

42. The Secretary-General of the Conference is continuing her fund-raising efforts for the above-mentioned trust funds. Additional contributions are expected in the near future.